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## News

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### **May 2016 Complaints, Cancellations Down and On-Time Performance Up From Previous Year**

WASHINGTON – In May, the U.S. Department of Transportation received 1,134 complaints about airline service from consumers, down 24.0 percent from the total of 1,492 filed in May 2015, but slightly up 1.07 percent from the 1,122 received in April 2016, according to the *Air Travel Consumer Report* released today.

The reporting carriers canceled 0.5 percent of their scheduled domestic flights in May 2016, an improvement over both the 1.1 percent cancellation rate posted in May 2015 and the 0.9 percent rate in April 2016. The May cancellation rate of 0.5 percent was the third lowest on record, with only September and October 2015 having a lower percentage of canceled flights.

The reporting carriers posted an on-time arrival rate of 83.4 percent in May 2016, up from the 80.5 percent on-time rate in May 2015, but down from the 84.5 percent mark in April 2016.

The consumer report also includes data on tarmac delays, chronically delayed flights, and the causes of flight delays filed with the Department's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) by the reporting carriers. The report also includes statistics on mishandled baggage reports filed by consumers with the reporting carriers, data on oversales, and information about the total number of animals that died, were injured, or were lost during air transport in May, as filed by the air carriers with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division.

#### **Tarmac Delays**

In May, airlines reported nine tarmac delays of more than three hours on domestic flights and four tarmac delays of more than four hours on international flights. All reported extended tarmac delays are investigated by the Department.

#### **Chronically Delayed Flights**

At the end of May, there were no flights that were chronically delayed – more than 30 minutes late more than 50 percent of the time – for two consecutive months or more. A list of flights that were chronically delayed for a single month is [available](#) from [BTS](#).

### **Causes of Flight Delays**

In May, the carriers filing on-time performance data reported that 16.56 percent of their flights were delayed – 4.89 percent of their flights were delayed by aviation system delays, compared to 4.53 percent in April; 5.69 percent by late-arriving aircraft, compared to 5.25 percent in April; 4.62 percent by factors within the airline's control, such as maintenance or crew problems, compared to 4.27 percent in April; 0.52 percent by extreme weather, compared to 0.34 percent in April; and 0.04 percent for security reasons, compared to 0.03 percent in April. In addition, 0.52 percent of flights were canceled and 0.28 percent were diverted.

Weather is a factor in both the extreme-weather category and the aviation-system category. This includes delays due to the re-routing of flights by DOT's Federal Aviation Administration in consultation with the carriers involved. Weather is also a factor in delays attributed to late-arriving aircraft, although airlines do not report specific causes in that category.

BTS uses the data collected from airlines to determine the percentage of late flights delayed by weather, which includes those reported in the categories of extreme weather, late-arriving aircraft, and National Aviation System delays. In May, 34.60 percent of late flights were delayed by weather, down from 35.21 percent in May 2015, but up from 29.94 percent in April 2016.

Detailed information on flight delays and their causes is available from [BTS](#).

### **Mishandled Baggage**

The U.S. carriers reporting mishandled baggage data posted a mishandled baggage rate of 2.40 reports per 1,000 passengers in May, an improvement over May 2015's rate of 2.97, but up from April 2016's rate of 2.31.

### **Incidents Involving Animals**

In May, carriers reported four incidents involving the death, injury, or loss of an animal while traveling by air, down from both the 13 reports filed in May 2015 and the seven reports filed in April 2016. May's incidents involved the death of one animal and injuries to three other animals.

### **Complaints About Treatment of Disabled Passengers**

The report also contains a tabulation of complaints filed with DOT in May against airlines regarding the treatment of passengers with disabilities. The Department received a total of 66 disability-related complaints in May, down from the 73 complaints received in May 2015, but up from the 52 complaints received in April 2016.

### **Complaints About Discrimination**

In May, the Department received seven complaints alleging discrimination by airlines due to factors other than disability – such as race, religion, national origin, or sex – up from both the total of two recorded in May 2015 and the four recorded in April 2016.

Consumers may file air travel service complaints on the web at [www.transportation.gov/airconsumer](http://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer) or by voice mail at (202) 366-2220 or by TTY at (202) 366-0511. They may also mail a complaint to the Aviation Consumer Protection Division, U.S. Department of Transportation, C-75, W96-432, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590.

Consumers who want on-time performance data for specific flights should call their airline's reservation number or their travel agent. This information is available on the computerized reservation systems used by these agents. The information is also available on the appropriate carrier's website.

The Air Travel Consumer Report can be found on DOT's website at <http://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/air-travel-consumer-reports>.

## **Facts**

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### **AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT July 2016**

#### **KEY MAY 2016 ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND FLIGHT CANCELLATION STATISTICS Based on Data Filed with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics by the 12 Reporting Carriers and Tarmac Data Filed by All Carriers**

#### **Overall**

83.4 percent on-time arrivals

#### **Highest On-Time Arrival Rates**

1. Hawaiian Airlines – 92.1 percent
2. Alaska Airlines – 90.3 percent
3. Delta Air Lines – 88.6 percent

#### **Lowest On-Time Arrival Rates**

1. Spirit Airlines – 76.4 percent
2. Virgin America – 76.7 percent
3. Frontier Airlines – 80.2 percent

#### **Domestic Flights with Longest Tarmac Delays Exceeding Three Hours**

1. United Airlines flight 1492 from Austin, Texas to Houston Bush, 5/27/16 – delayed 247 minutes on the tarmac at Houston Bush
2. United Airlines flight 61 from Newark to San Francisco, 5/19/16 – delayed 213 minutes on the tarmac in Oakland, Calif. after being diverted
3. Mesa Airlines flight 6147 from Austin, Texas to Houston Bush, 5/26/16 – delayed 205 minutes on the tarmac in Austin, Texas
4. Envoy Air flight 3248 from Omaha, Neb. to Dallas-Fort Worth, 5/29/16 – delayed 200 minutes on the tarmac in Abilene, Texas after being diverted

5. American Airlines flight 1453 from Charlotte to Chicago O'Hare, 5/31/16 – delayed 195 minutes on the tarmac in Charlotte

### **International Flights with Longest Tarmac Delays Exceeding Four Hours**

1. Taca Airlines flight 310 from San Salvador, El Salvador to Miami, 5/4/16 – delayed 429 minutes on the tarmac in Tampa after being diverted
2. United Airlines flight 1034 from Houston Bush to Panama City, Panama, 5/27/16 – delayed 253 minutes on the tarmac at Houston Bush
3. Taca Airlines flight 368 from San Salvador, El Salvador to Houston Bush, 5/14/16 – delayed 249 minutes on the tarmac in Galveston, Texas after being diverted
4. United Airlines flight 104 from São Paulo, Brazil to Houston Bush, 5/26/16 – delayed 246 minutes on the tarmac in San Antonio, Texas after being diverted

### **Highest Rates of Canceled Flights**

1. Spirit Airlines – 1.4 percent
2. ExpressJet Airlines – 1.1 percent
3. Virgin America – 0.7 percent

### **Lowest Rates of Canceled Flights**

1. Delta Air Lines – 0.0 percent
2. Alaska Airlines – 0.2 percent
3. Hawaiian Airlines – 0.3 percent

\* Delta Air Lines canceled 39 flights in May.

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